(17)

ETICKS, SECTARIES,
and Schismaticks,

covered to be the Antichrist yet
maining, and the great Enemies of the
Peace of this Kingdome.

The Question rightly stated and debated.

a Preparation to the great day of Humili-
liation on *March* 10. next ensuing.

a Hint about Ordination, and the
Covenant.

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to them that call evill good, and good evill, that
darkenesse for light, and light for darkenesse, Isay

Salt is good, but if the Salt hath lost its Savour; where-
withall is it be salted, it is good for nothing but to be cast
out and trodden underfoot of men. Matth. 5. 13. *with*
14. 34.

LONDON,
Printed in the Yeare, 1647.

78(17)

HERETICKS, SECTARIES

and Schismatocks,

Discovered to be the Antichrist yet

remaining, and the great Enemies of the

Peace of this Kingdome.

The Question rightly stated and debated.

As a Preparation to the great day of Humili-

liation on May 6. next coming.

With a Hint about Ordination, and the

Covenant.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year, 1647.

To the right Honourable the High Court of Parliament.

NOble Princes and Patriots, remember in all your Lawes and Ordinances, that as Iesus Christ (who is the faithfull witnesse, and will be one day for his truth and People) is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, and hath made the Saints who are his Anointed ones (1 Iohn 2. 27.) Kings and Priest to God and his Father, so is he the one onely Law-giver, who is able to save and destroy, and hath commanded the Kings of the Earth, not to touch his Anointed, nor doe his Prophets harme, for he reproveth even Kings for their sakes; If Hee have made them Priests and Prophets, who shall hinder them to offer up spirituall Sacrifices to God. 1 Pet. 2. 5. And as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God to minister the gift one to another, as every man hath received it. 1 Pet. 4. 10. For every Scribe who is instructed unto the Kingdome of Heaven, bringeth out of his treasury things new and old, Matth. 13. 52. If the Saints as bottles be filled with new wine of the Spirit, they cannot but powre it forth unto their friends, that which they have seene and heard, and in their owne soules have tasted of the word of life they cannot but declare and speake, 1 Iohn 1. 2. 3. compared with Acts 4. 20. Iohn 7. 38.

Rev. 1. 5.

Rev 1. 6. Iam. 4.

Psal. 105. 14, 15.

Have an eye therefore I beseech you, to the designes of such men who would engage you to cast up bankes, that you might stop the current of these Waters, for these floods will carrie all before them, and who ever perswades you to it, I tell you even weeping they

they are the Enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet adore you to give life to Antichrist, and the Image of the Beast, that as many as will not worship the Image of the Beast, should be killed, notwithstanding the dreadfull dooms pronounced by God himselfe, Revel. 14. 9. 10 11. If any man doe worship the Beast and his Image, and receive his marke in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drinke of the wrath of God, and they shall have no rest day nor night, &c. Be wise now therefore, O yee Princes, be instructed yee Iudges of our Earth, Kisse the Sonne least he be angry and yee perish in the way, though yee have already steered our weather-beaten ship, through many angry waves, and billowes, and thinke you are come neere to the faire Havens of peace and happinesse, yet if instead of honouring Iesus Christ, and submitting to his Royall Scepter, you shall be either flustered or threatned to set your selves under any notion or pretence whatsoever against the Saints, and to kick against the pricks, you will yet miscarry and split upon this Rock, and in all your debates and consultations shall be dash't in peices like a Potters Vessel, for whosoever shall fall on that Stone shall be broken: Grave Senators, consider the Holy Spirit, Zach. 12. 3. hath foretold that in the day of the Gospel, the Lord will make Jerusalem, (viz. the Saints) a burthensome stone to all people, all that burthen themselves with it shall be rent in peices, though all the people of the Earth be gathered together against it: Those men who stickle most against the Saints under the name of Heretickes and Schismaticks shall be discovered to be such themselves, but as our Saviour said, they are wise in their Generation, and they deale with you herein as the crafty and ingenious Horse-Courser, with his untamed and unruly pranser, speaks faire, strokes and scratches him, whilst he be mounted into the saddle, and then he strikes, and spurs, and gallops, till he have broken him to his will: They bespeake you as having a great power in the worship of God, over the consciences of men, but I beseech you receive no honour from those men who thus cry up your power and authority that they may be honoured by you, and derive power and authority from you againe to be unrighteous Iudges both over your selves and other men, as their Reverend Fathers the Bishops were, they seeke their owne things and not the things of Iesus Christ, but it concernes their interest, by this craft they have their livings: and they know that if permission

mission be once given to the Saints freely to make knowne the power of the Spirit, which hath wrought so mightily in them, their spirit of naturall reason, though decked and adorned with systems of Logick, Philosophy, and Schoole-divinity, will not be able to stand in competion with it, greater is he that is in the Saints, then he that is in the world, the teachings of the spirit, shall be more powerfull and effectuall to take hold of the hearts of men, then all the workes and writings of their Postillers and Commentators can be, these cannot speake so to the consciences of poore Christians as the Spirit can: And the feet of such as can bring glad tydings of peace to such poore soules are exceeding beautifull, and will bee, maugree the opposition of these men.

Most honoured worthies, pray observe with me, how Babylon the Mother of Harlots, Fornications, and Abominations of the Earth, (which are chiefly spirituall and doe concerne our worship) hath this name written in her fore-head MYSTERY; her workings are and have been still MYSTERIOUS, hardly to be found out and traced, But I have indeavoured as a blood-hound to pursue her, for by these Characters of bloodinesse you shall be sure to know her, the beast whereon shee sits is bloody coloured, her garments are dyed in blood, Revel. 17. 5. 3. 4 6. in her habitation is found the blood of Prophets and of Saints. cap. 18 24. her drinke wherewith she makes her selfe drunke, is blood of the Saints, and the Kings, and Inhabitants of the Earth, have beene made drunke with her wine; England, Oh England hath formerly plaid the beast with her, if not the beast under her on which hath sitten, and for this cause we have had of late, blood given us to drinke, for we were worthy; let it, oh let it be so no more, let not England againe make war with the Lambe, for he is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. Revel. 17 14. Suppose grave Senators, those men so much miscalled were indeed such as they are represented to be, and their Presbyterian adversaries had their Churches without crime or Error (which is most false) and so might justly cast them out: yet since our Saviour Christ hath commanded, that the tares and the wheat should grow together till the harvest, what cruelty is this toward such men, who live peaceably among men, unblameable in their conversation, pay you tax and tribute, and in a word, doe in all things which

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the Apostle Paul exercise themselves to keep faith and a good conscience towards God and men, what cruelty I say is it, that the Civil Magistrate should be incensed against them, & should by all ways be solicited, not to give them a toleration that is, not to suffer them when they have so faithfully engaged for them: The field in the Parable must have some interpretation, it must have reference to Church or State, Christ would have them suffered some where, but their adversaries who pretend so much for Christ, are indeed in this particular as in many other things Antichrist, i. e. against Christ, he saith let them grow together, these men say nay, let them be pulled up; lamentable will the condition of many people in this Kingdome, and other places be, if many choise young men and others, who are ordained by Iesus Christ to eternall life and glory, and have received a large portion of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (the only teacher of his people) whereby they may edifie and build others up in the most holy faith, if the mouths of these must be stopped for want of that empty and fruitlesse (as is conceived) Ceremony of Ordination, which the doctrine (peradventure) of the Presbyterie of Scotland hath taught their consciences to startle at and deny: for in the 1. booke of the Disciplin of the Kirke of Scotland commanded to be practised in the same Kirke. Anno Dom. 1641. under the head of Admission, thus they teach. pag. 31. Other Ceremony then the publick Approbation of the people, and Declaration of the chiefe Minister, that the person there presented is appointed to serve the Church. We cannot approve, for all be it, the Apostles used Imposition of Hands, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the Ceremony, we judge not necessary.

If any gift were conveyed who would deny, nay, who would not rejoyce to be partaker of it? but whilst men see that this is but a vain Imitation of that primitive Apostolical Presbytery, who had received from Iesus Christ and could convey to others such gifts of the Spirit, for the Ministry of the Gospel as have been lost whilst we have been under the power of Antichrist, and such as none of the Sons of men have received at this day, and therefore cannot bestow on others, they are exceedingly troubled in their Spirits, & can judge the ceremony at the least but a taking of Gods name in vaine: Let my counsell then (wise Counsellors) be acceptable touching these men, that as in all your Declarations

whilst

whilst you had any need of them either in their Persons or Estates, you have ingaged to be tender towards them, which Tenderness they could conceive to be no lesse, then a continued liberty in their severall wayes of worship, which they then enjoyed, and not after the losse of many of their lives, and a parting with a good part of ther lively-hoods for your preservation, an imprisoning of their persons, and a wasting of the remainder, by Attendance, Suites, Fees, Fines, and such other charges as necessarily attend such a condition.

And all this for the practise of those very things you seemed then to allow in them, when you thus time after time declared Tenderncsse towards them, oh doe not, doe not thus keep promise with them, let not this be the recompence you give them for all the labour of love they have shewed unto you, doe not for the gratification of a few men, who from Sion Colledge either vent their considerations contrary to your Ordinances, when they like them not, or send you Votes, Orders and Ordinances (though Subtilly and mediately by the Assembly) at their pleasures, which you must confirme or be rayled at in every Pulpit in the City, and have the multitude incenst against you, and sent crying after you for establishing of such things, as I dare say not one of a thousand of them knowes or understands, having a strong influence also by their Emissaries upon the adjacent Counties that they may concur with them in their destructive wayes and actions, if these men can thwart you thus already, before they have any power in ther hands, consider I pray what they would doe, if power should be given them according to their desire, we have too lately bought repentance from their predicessors the Bishops at too dear a rate: all which I lay before you, and if you please to peruse this tract, you shall see these men proved the greatest Hereticks and Schismaticks in the Kingdome at this day: And as touching these men who are so much reproached by them, you shall find them to be according to what they understand, pure in religion, having not the forme, but the power of godlinesse in their publique and private meetings, dayly praying the Lord for you, innocent in their lives, inoffensive in their conversations, peaceable in the places where they live, and obedient to your iust power. Our Lord Iesus Christ in all his goings out with them in these few last yeares, not only opening their purses, but their

their very bowels and hearts, making them ready and willing to ſpend & to be ſpent for you, hath given both to your ſelves & al the world in all ages to come, a ſufficient demonſtration of their harmleſſeneſſe, integrity & faithfulneſſe unto you, and if you wil not beleeve these *ſpeaking out on* their behalfe, *neither would yee, if an* Angel from *heaven ſhould come and witneſs for them. Now the God of wiſedome give you to diſcerne betwixt truth, and error betwixt good and evill, friends and enemies, Saints and Hereticks: and to hearken to the wiſe counſell of* Gamaliel, *a great Statiſt concerning the Sectaries of* thoſe *times: Acts 5. 35. 38. 39. With which I ſhall conclude, take heed to your ſelves what you intend to doe as touching theſe men, refraine from theſe men, and let them alone: for if this counſell or worke be of men it will come to naught, but if it be of God, yee cannot overthrow it, leaſt happily yee be even found fighters againſt God.*

Acts 26. 9. 10. 11.

I verily thought I ought to doe many things againſt the name of Ieſus.

And many of the Saints did I ſhut up in priſon, I puniſht them oft, and compelled them to blaſpheme, and I perſecuted them even to ſtrange Cities.

TO

To every Reader.

I Have endeavoured in this discourse so farre as the present opportunity and time would give me leave to undeceive thee: however to hint out Truth and a way to others, who have more leisure for prosecution: the stile is without quaintnesse, plaine and familiar, that I might not speake to the meanest (for whom I mainly did intend it) as a Barbarian: If you please to cast your eye upon this word of distinction following, it may give you some light for the better understanding of the whole discourse, and being kept in memory will in some measure enable thee (if thou have any knowledge of the things of Christ) to judge of truth and Errour in reference to the severall partyes it makes mention of.

A Church or an Assembly
1. *Of their Foundation.*
2. *Of their Members.*
4. *Of their Ministry.*

Assembly may be said to be true or false in respect
4. of their Doctrine.
5. of their Institutions or Ordinances.
6. of their placing and exercise of power.

Such Assemblies or Churches who have not God in Christ for the foundation or object of their worship, can in no sence be called true or Christian Churches, as the Turkes who worship Mahomet, &c. *And such as doe lay this foundation may, in some sence be called true or Christian Churches.*

But then as they depart from the truth of Scripture either in their members, ministry, doctrines, institutions or Ordinances, right placing or exercise of power or Administration of Discipline, (if you please so to cal it in any, some or all of those, so may they be) said to be more or lesse false or Antichristian, which is a building wood, hay, and stubble upon the foundation, as by the book of the Revelation, *it appeares Antichrist hath done in all Ages; all which must be destroyed with fire, I shall make no farther applycation: consider what is said, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

THE wiſeſt of meer men hath ſaid it, *That there is no new thing under the Sun*, but that which hath been is at this day, and what is now ſhall be afterwards, if God prevent not: under baſe and odious names, *Perſecution* hath in all Ages been the Saints portion. The Scribes and Phariſees in our Saviours time, boaſted, that had they lived in the dayes of their fathers they would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets; yet theſe very men cruelly perſecuted (and put to death ſome of) the Apoſtles, and Crucified *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was the Lord, not onely of the Prophets, but of life and glory too; though he himſelf did forewarn them of it, and ſo brought upon their own heads all the bloodſhed upon earth, from righteous *Abel* to *Zacharias*: And I fear that all theſe things are coming upon this Generation; elſe, what may be the reaſon, that whileſt thoſe that are called, and faithfull, and choſen in the land, who have been with the *Lamb*, and who have through the power of the *Lamb* overcome that part of the Beaſt, (*viz.*) that Antichriſtian and Malignant power, that hath riſen up againſt them at this time, in this Nation; whileſt theſe I ſay, after all their travell and ſorrow, in expence of blood and eſtate, are thinking upon the ſweet fruit of their long endured hardſhips, and hazards, and peace, others have whet their tongues ſharper then any two edged ſword, and have dipt their Pens in the blackneſſe, yea, and darkneſſe of Hell it ſelf, continually ſending forth moſt railing and bitter ſpeeches, and are thus afreſh preparing war againſt them: If new troubles be not creating for theſe men; what mean thoſe daily invective Alarms, (by ſuch who are called the Miniſters of

Eccle. 1.9.

Mat. 23.

Ier. 17.14.

Jesus Christ too) which from Presse and Pulpit, are ratled in the ears of our most worthy *Senators*, and other subordinate Magistrates in the Kingdom, incensing, and provoking them, contrary to their own judgements and reason, against such, who by Gods even miraculous blessing upon their weak endeavours, have been theirs, and the Kingdoms Saviours: Sometimes dashing Hell fire in the faces of their consciences to fright them (if possible) into the same persecution and condemnation with themselves; and then otherwhile, beseeching them, as they tender the Blessings, Peace, and prosperity of the Nation, that they would rise up in indignation against these Heretiques, Sectaries, and Schismaticks (for so they call them) the seducers, and deceivers of the people to their utter extirpation; the old way of Satan, the great Seducer of the Nations, and all such who cleave to this present world, to besmear the faithfull and godly of the land in all ages, with names of ignominy, and reproach, and so to fall upon them to their ruin and destruction: Witnesses of which Truth, have the Prophets been in all Ages, yea, Christ himself and his Apostles, with all the faithfull Martyrs to this very day; whose accusations still were, *these men* are pestilent fellows, movers of sedition, ring leaders of Sects, broachers of strange Doctrines, teaching things contrary to the Law, Seducers, stirrers up of the people, drawing disciples after them, speaking against *Cæsar*, troublers of the State, and the like; but the Saints are in expectation, that these men who thus resist the people of God, as sometimes *Jannes* & *Iambres* withstood *Moses*, shall not proceed much farther, & that their folly shal be made manifest to all: For this wicked one, and all such as act from him and for him, shal the Lord consume shortly by the Spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightnesse of his coming, as hath in some measure been fulfilled already in our dayes, and shall be more and more, till *Babylon* be wholly fallen, as a milstone to the bottom of the Sea, never to rise again any more, and till the *Beast* be taken, and with him the false Prophets, and be cast alive into the Lake of fire burning with Brimston. If new Gives and Fetters be not contriving for the Saints; why are the poor, misled, and ungrate-

Revel. 18. 20.

Revel. 19. 20.

full

full Citizens, ſo conſtantly hurried on with moſt troubleſome and unwearied paines to remonſtrate, Petition upon Petition, and act contrary to the Priviledges of Parliament, their own intereſts, and the Kingdomes; little dreaming what a foundation they are laying for their own deſtruction, if affairs be tranſacted after their deſires, numerouſly, and tumultuouſly, and now formally attending day after day at *Weſtminſter*, as if they intended to force the Parliament to ſome unjuſt Laws or Ordinances againſt other men, for ſatisfaction of their own carnall luſts, and others who continually inſtigate and ſolicite them to this ſervice: Saying in their hearts, we will not have this man to reign over us, Come let us kill him and the inheritance ſhall be ours: Let us traduce theſe men, Petition againſt them, and every way make them vile and odious to the Magiſtrates and the People: That now they have ſubdued the Enemy for us, we may divide the places of Honour and Profit amongſt our ſelves; paſſionately, and with uncivill language, every where complaining of them, as Hereticks, Sectaries and Schiſmaticks, and ſuch, who though they have ventured lives and eſtates for their preſervations, yet becauſe they differ, but (it may be) in ſome petty circumſtance, or opinion from them, muſt be thought unfit to breath in the ſame common aire with them, and to enjoy the common priviledges and liberties of Native Subjects; though if any, they have moſt right unto them, as by birth claiming the ſame intereſts with others, and having redeemed them well nigh loſt, by their own proweſſe and valour in the field.

But to ſtop the rage of theſe unſtable waters; For the waters upon which the Whore ſits, are multitudes and people; and to ſtill this out-cry (if poſſible) let us conſider who theſe people are, and whether or no indeed & truth, any ſuch perſons may be found amongſt us, who are ſo called?

We will firſt then inquire after the Names themſelves, and ſee what they hold forth unto us, and what may be concluded thence. 1.

Secondly, We ſhall prove, that though the Presbyterian Churches were truly conſtituted, and ordered according to the rule of the Word (as indeed they are not) yet maintain- 2.

ing any errour either in judgement or practice, that the reſt of the Chriſtians in the Kingdome, who joyne not themſelves to them, cannot truly and properly be termed Schiſmaticks for this.

3. Thirdly, we ſhall clear it (we hope) to every reaſonable underſtanding, that in caſe theſe names of Hereticks, Sectaries and Schiſmaticks be truly to be applied to any perſons in this Nation, that themſelves & no others do ſo properly deſerve that name, and that they onely make the rent and diviſion that is amongſt us: For theſe names we ſhall ſpeak of them according to the Scriptures onely, that foundation, upon which if we build, we ſhall ſtand faſt like to mount *Zion*, which cannot be removed, and from which if we turn aſide, we cannot but be ſhaken into duſt, being built upon the quick-ſand of every unſtable mans fancy, of whom the holy Ghoſt hath ſaid, *Pſal.*30.5. Verily man, yea, every man at his eſtate, his beſt eſtate is vanity, nay altogether vanity, and that to be laid in the balance, he is lighter then vanity; nay plainly, he is a lie: Beware then of men, eſpecially ſuch men (wo be to them) who ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt men, Who love the uppermoſt ſeats at feaſts, VVho tithe Mint, and Aniſe, and Comin, and paſſe over judgement, mercy, faith and the love of God; our too much doting upon men hath forced this expreſſion: to return then,

Mat. 24. Luke 11.

Hereſie is a Greek word, having its derivation from αἱρέω which ſignifies to chuſe, ſo that it holds forth in the generall no more then the choice of any opinion, either good or bad: So it was uſed amongſt the Heathens, *Ut non ſum in eadem tecum hæreſi*, i. e. *opinione*, I am not in the ſame opinion with thee: Learned *Paſſor* ſaith, its uſed in a good ſence, *Act.*24. 14. After the way which men cal Hereſie, ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers: the Religion of the Apoſtles appointed by our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, was then called by thoſe who were the ſtricteſt profeſſors of that time, the great Rabbies, and Doctors of the People, (but blinde leaders of the blinde) Hereſie, or a Sect; I wiſh that now, that which comes neereſt to Chriſts Inſtitution, and his Apoſtles, were not ſo judged by the moſt of men, and thoſe who think themſelves the wiſeſt too:

Tullie.

too: but the world by wiſdome knows not God, and this wiſdome is no better then fooliſhneſſe with God: You ſee briefly, what the name Heretick Imports; the choice of an opinion not generally received; Though ſometimes it falls out to be the truth, even the truth it ſelfe, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, even Chriſt himſelf.

The next word, which is Sect, whence comes the common name Sectaries, a word now ſo much in uſe; and this is no other, then the Latine of the former Greek word, made into Engliſh, as you may ſee, *Acts* 5.17. Chap. 15.5. And elſewhere, where you finde mention made of the Sects of the *Saduces* and *Phariſees*; and the Originall word is ſtill αἵρεσις the Hereſie of the *Saduces* and *Phariſees*, and ſo in the place ſore quoted, *Acts* 24 14. the choiſe of Chriſt, and the true chriſtian Religion is called a Hereſie; ſo that theſe two words ſignifie but one and the ſame thing; only one is the Greek Word, and the other is the Latine of it, as you may ſee further in the 1 Cor. 11.18,19. Which place I alleadge, that we may finde out fully the meaning of the laſt word which is Schiſme, & hath its Etymologie from the Greek word σχίζω, *Findo*, to cleave, or rent aſunder, as you may finde it uſed in *Matth.* 9. 16. Chap 27.51. *Luke* 5.26. and many other places, ſo that Schiſme is properly a ſeperation or diviſion in a body, whoſe parts were before united, and in Scripture ſignification holds forth a diviſion, or diſcention in Judgement, or opinion from others in what was before received and maintained together with them; there muſt be a Vnion or Conjunction before this parting and diviſion, according to the true and proper ſenſe of the word, or elſe it cannot be a Schiſme; the full underſtanding of the word you may have in *Iohn* 7 43. and 10.19. compared with 1 *Cor.* 11. 18 19. the two firſt texts tels us there was a diviſion among the people: and in the laſt the tearms Hereſie, Sect, and Schiſme, are uſed promiſcuouſly, and ſeem to ſignifie but the ſame thing, as in ver. 18. I heare there are Schiſmes among you, and I partly beleeve it; and in the 19. the Apoſtle renders the reaſon of this beliefe; for there muſt be Hereſies, or Sects; or it muſt be ſo, for this cauſe, that thoſe that are approved may be made manifeſt:

So here you have all together, and hold out but the very ſame to us, or at moſt, that one is the cauſe, and the other the effect; becauſe the choice of an opinion differing from others, is oft, and hath been an occaſion to thoſe that entertain that opinion, to divde from others in their practiſe: alſo thus, Hereſie hath uſually in the ordinarie ſenſe of men, referred to the Judgment, and Schiſme to the practiſe.

And becauſe the Churches of the New Teſtament were every way true and ſound, both in reſpect of their Foundation, Members, Miniſtry, Doctrines, Inſtitutions, and Cenſures, in their primitive Apoſtolicall planting, therefore thoſe that were once joyned to them, and then choſe out any opinion to themſelves, differing from them, and upon that opinion made a diviſion and ſeperation in their practiſe, were in the true genuine ſignification of the words, truly and properly Hereticks and Schiſmaticks ſo called: but becauſe the Churches of Ieſus Chriſt ſtraight after, & even in the Apoſtles time, begun to decline from their firſt purity, & every way, & to wax worſe and worſe, till the man of ſin, mentioned, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 3. 6. came fully to be revealed, which hath now been for many hundred of yeares, therefore ſuch could not be Hereticks and Schiſmaticks: who after the Apoſtles time, and in ſucceeding ages took up opinions, which were contrary both to the Doctrine and Practiſe of thoſe declining Churches; which were now no longer the true Churches of Ieſus Chriſt, according to their originall Inſtitution and Plantation, but the falſe and faigned Churches of Antichriſt, which were to ſucceed and come in the room and ſtead of the true ones, as is cleare by the whole book of the Revelations, which is mainly a propheticall Hiſtory, and Narrative of the Riſe, Reign, and Ruine of Antichriſt; where you may ſee how large his Territories are, & how far his power reacheth, eſpecially in that Text of *Rev.* 13. where it it ſaid ver. 3. that all the world wondered after the Beaſt; and ver. 8. All that dwell on the earth ſhall worſhip him, whoſe names are not written in the Lambs book of life. *And behold theſe names* are the men who in all ages have been accounted the Hereticks, Sectaries, and Schiſmaticks of the times; *And theſe names are they, who are*

ſo

so esteemed at this very day; as is most evident to such, whose eyes are anointed with the eye salve of the spirit of God, to discern of things that differ, in reference to the present age wherein they live, which is confirmed every day by those who do come after them; so were the *Waldenses* reckoned in their times; the *Wicklevites*, our own country men in their generation; the *Hussites*, and the *Jerman Lutherans* in theirs, all esteemed, and Nicknamed Hereticks and Schismaticks by the people of that age in which they lived, but have been even ever Justified by the succeeding generations more and more; as being such who have been enlightened to depart from the errours of those times, and have revived, and uncovered some remnants and sparks of divine Light and truth, which had been raked up in the Ashes of the filthy Abominations, Superstitions, and Traditions of that Antichrist, the Church of Rome: and here by the way observe who they are, and whose Poyson it is, even of the Divell and Antichrist, that men blasphemers, truly so called, spit out daily against *New Light*, not that it is indeed New, but the old Light and Truth newly discovered again, and cleared from those foggs and mists, which arose out of the bottomlesse Pit; happy is it for those men, if they sin of weakness, it may be forgiven; but if of Malice or Wilfulnesse, let them remember, that all sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Spirit (the Spirit of Light and Truth, by which Christ enlighteneth every one that comes into the world) shall never be forgiven neither in this life, nor that to come: *i e.* not at all: Dear country-men, consider that the Mystery of iniquity was not at his full heighth presently, nor did the man of sin grow up to his full age in a little time: neither was Materiall nor Antichristian Rome built in one day (as it is in the Proverb.) Rev. 9. 2.

It was the work of many generations to establish the throne of Antichrist; and it will require no small time to unthrone him againe; the stones of this Babell must be pulled down, not all together, but one after another: there are 7. severall Angels, who have their 7. severall Vialls to powre out for the destruction of the Beast *Rev.* 16. and these all have their severall times wherein to effect their works: and as divers a-

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ges before us, have had their Chair in this ſervice; we alſo in our generation muſt have ours, and that not the leaſt, though probably it may be the laſt, elſe moſt (if not all) who have laboured to unfold this Myſterie, have been deceived, though very much of it be yet undiſcovered to the moſt: now if wee look at the manner of his deſtruction, the Apoſtle tels us, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. It ſhall be by the ſpirit of the mouth of Chriſt, and the brightneſſe of his comming: the Spirit and the Light are all together Inſtruments in the hand of Chriſt, to bring to paſſe this great deſtruction; and whoever ſpeakes againſt the one muſt blaſpheme the other: Let thoſe men then, who boaſt of the Spirit, beware how they reproach the Light, leaſt they grieve the holy ſpirit of God in others, and quench it in themſelves; which is believed to be done in ſome of them already, their abilities being blaſted, in regard of what they have been heretofore: I have inſiſted awhile in opening of theſe Names, that men may ſee how improbable (if not impoſſible) it is, that thoſe men who were but a few years ſince the greateſt Champions, againſt Biſhops, Croſſe, Surpliſſe, and Altar-worſhip, and ſuch things as are now generally ſworn againſt, as Antichriſtian, and after this day the higheſt oppoſers of Antichriſt in this Kingdome, in the remainders of him, thoſe that were formerly lookt on as the great Puritans, and non Conformiſts, the tearmes of reproach then in uſe; how unlikely I ſay is it, that theſe very men ſhould be now turned Hereticks, Sectaries, and Schiſmaticks, any other then what they then were, after they have ſo faithfully ſerved the Parliament in this great cauſe of Religion and Liberty, with the loſſe of blood and eſtate: they are indeed ſuch Hereticks &c. as they before mentioned, who have in all ages oppoſed the wayes of the man of ſin in his Erroneous Doctrines and practiſes of Idolatry, and Superſtitions, and no other, which ſhall be further manifeſted in the enſuing diſcourſe; yet before I paſſe to the ſecond thing, give me leave to anſwer an Objection, which may be framed thus:

Object. If thoſe that are called Hereticks, *&c.* be no other then ſuch as have oppoſed Antichriſt in all ages then you ſeem to confound our Churches, with that of the Church of Rome,

and

and how weak this assertion is, who sees not, when we are so long since departed from her, and are therefore hated by her, and are our selves deemed to be Hereticks and Schismaticks for this, in her account.

True it is, there hath been in many things a departure from the Church of *Rome*, wherein she is erronious, and amongst them *England* hath had a share, but there are yet many things wherein she agrees with her, the extirpation of some of which hath too lately cost her dear; and she will be sooner or later at farther expence, and charge in the same kinde; for the casting out of those other things that remain amongst us, if Jesus Christ by the wisdom and tenderness of this Parliament, or otherwise finde not out some expedient for prevention. *Answ.*

But you will say, these are but words, if there be such things indeed, discover them; we are upon a Reformation and have engaged our selves by Solemn Covenant, each one to go before another in the example of a reall Reformation, in all duties we owe to God and man. *Quest.*

If it be so, *Solomon* tels you its better not to vow, then (having vowed) not to perform; remember the invocations and attestations of the great God, as the searcher of all hearts for your performance, and for your help herein; and for Answer of this Question, I shall insist onely in one particular, which as a fountain, if you will follow, will run out into many streams, and doth in a manner contain in it all the rest; and it is this, *a Spirit and principle of persecution*, contrary to the great command of *Iesus Christ*, which he calls the Royall Law of *love*, and to the great duty of Christians, *love*, which is termed the fulfilling of the Law, by this saith Christ, shall men know ye are my disciples: *i.e.* Reall Christians, if ye love one another, this is the duty which in Scripture is every where pressed, and was slighted and neglected generally by all before our troubles and sorrows came upon us; the want of this was the true cause of that bitter and cruell persecution of the godly, in regard of their consciences, by the Bishops and their adherents in their Popish and Antichristian Courts of High Commission, Commissaries, and Chancellors; and the want of this *love*, was the cause too of our oppressions *Answ.*

in our eſtates in the other Courts of the Kingdom, (both legall and illegall) ſo that all theſe were turned into gall and wormwood, and our Laws by wreſting of them, were inſtead of remedies, no better then nets and ſnares unto us, and the further men went this way commonly, the more were they inſnared, and entangled.

But you will ſay, theſe Courts are now removed with their judges, there is now no more fear of theſe, theſe yokes are taken from off our necks, wherefore do you yet complain?

I anſwer, Though we have fought, and ſworn down Archbiſhops, Biſhops, with all their rabble and dependents, and ſo are likely to receive no further damage by them, and theſe yokes which they created for us are caſt away; yet if the ſame *Spirit and principle* remain within us and amongſt us, it will act the ſame things, though in another form and ſhape, and Perſecutions, Fines, and Impriſonments, to the utter ruin of Families, ſhall yet be the portion of the Saints in this Kingdom, the beginnings whereof, as they are felt by ſome already, ſo are they feared almoſt by all, and are too viſible to every diſcerning eye: And if you yet further demand of me what this *Spirit* and *Principle* is, which will thus manifeſt it ſelf to the perſecution and deſtruction of the innocent and faithfull in this Kingdom?

I anſwer, It is *that very ſpirit of Satan and Antichriſt moſt contrary to the Goſpel ſpirit of love*, which is deſcribed by the Apoſtle in 2 *Theſ.*2.4. which is yet remaining amongſt us, even this, that ſome of the ſons of men, ſit as God in the Temple of God, exalting themſelves above all that is called God, or is worſhipped: Every Saint is a Temple of the living God, 2 *Cor.*6.10. Whoever then, whether a particular perſon, or a collective body in this temple exalts himſelf above God, or that which is worſhipped, which is nothing elſe but God, for God only is to be worſhipped; *this is the Antichriſt*: the meaning is, when God hath given Commands, Rules, and Directions in his word to thoſe that are his in *Ieſus Chriſt* for his worſhip and ſervice, and *Ieſus Chriſt* hath ſent his ſpirit into their hearts to perſwade them of the force of theſe commands,

mands, and of the manner of this worſhip, (For his ſheep hear his voice, and will not follow a ſtranger,) *if there be any man, ſort, or rank of men whatever*, that take upon them to judge of theſe commands, and to interpret theſe rules for others, ſo as to enforce obedience from others to their interpretations: this I conceive is the Antichriſt, who ſits as God in the *Temple of God, (the Spirits and conſciences of men)* and ſo exalts himſelf above all that is called God, or worſhipped, *i.e.* will be obeyed in the place, and ſtead of God, and above him, God commanding one thing to the conſcience, and *He* another. This is Popery, and the very top of all Popery, the very life, blood, and ſpirit, that runs through the whole body of it: for what *makes the Pope but this*, that he takes upon himſelf, to be the *infallible Interpreter, and judge of the Scriptures*, and all the Papiſts that do not acknowledge him ſo to be, yet place this Infallability ſome where, either in the Church, or in a Generall Counſell, and when that cannot be had, the Pope with his Conſiſtory, are in the place of it, ſo that the Papiſts do all of them, profeſſe an *infallibility of judgement, and interpretation* of the Scriptures. and this makes them to impoſe upon men according to their own pleaſure, yet with ſome ſhew of truth and reaſon.

Ioh. 10. 4 5.

2 Theſ. 2 4.

But for other men amongſt us, who do in their own words deny this *infallibility of interpretation*, and yet to impoſe upon others what they do interpret, as if they were *infallible*; as it is in it ſelf ridiculous, ſo is it in my thoughts an aggravation of the crime, and makes it more *Antichriſtian in them*, then in the Pope himſelf; who peradventure acts in this according to what he holds, but theſe, juſt contrary to what themſelves believe, and profeſſe.

I could tell you of a people, who deny themſelves infallible, yet uſe to determine all their Eccleſiaſticall controverſies, and they are very large (for *In Ordine ad Spiritualia*, i.e. in reference to the Church they can take in much) by a Nationall Aſſembly, and in a vacancy of that, by a Committee or Commiſſioners choſen from amongſt them, with a Chairman, or a Conſiſtory rather, anſwering that of the Cardinals with the Pope, to whom if obedience be not yielded, proceſſe

is made to Excommunication, and after that to confiſcation, baniſhment, and death; whether this copy do not anſwer the originall pattern at *Rome*, you that know, judge, and tell me, if it be not as like it, as *ovum ovo*, and one apple to another: Now if this be that Reformation which men ſo earneſtly purſue, that which is the very *ſpirit, life, & ſoul of Popery*, which hath given *denomination and being to it*, by which it hath grown up, and come to his full height & ſtrength, by which it is upheld to this very day, whereby it brought into the world all its Hereticall & helliſh doctrines, all its damnable & Paganiſh idolatries, all its apiſh & childiſh Fopperies, Ceremonies, & Superſtitions, *and from which it acted* all its cruel burnings, hangings impriſonings, murthers, maſſacres, Rebellions, Treaſons, Powder-plots, and what ever men can call deteſtable and Deviliſh. If I ſay this ſpirit muſt yet be kept amongſt us, put it into what form or beautifull ſhape you pleaſe, call it by what name you will, let it act out under what notion of Religion, or Reformation you can imagine, it is *the ſame Antichriſt* ſtill, & no other: And now fellow Covenanters, I think it is time for us to lay our hands upon our hearts, and conſider where we are, what we are doing and whether we are going, if inſtead of having our faces Sion ward, we be not poſting back again to *Rome*, though not in the old road. If it be ſo (as alas, it is too true) be not deceived, God is not mocked; its not crying, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, Reformation, Government, ſuppreſſing Sects and Hereſies, theſe vain words will not ſave us, whileſt we foment this ſpirit of Antichriſt, this principle of hatred, perſecution, & diviſion in one another, that ſome of us muſt judge for our ſelves, and others too in the things of Chriſt, that we muſt *interpret the Word*, as if we were infallible, (when we acknowledge we are not ſo) and *muſt impoſe our own fallible ſences*, and *interpretations upon others*; and in caſe of *non-Conformity*, muſt force obedience from them: whileſt we thus bite, and devour one another, let us take heed that we be not devoured one of another, this Reformation is not after the *Goſpel*; God is *love*, and he that dwels in love, dwels in God, and God in him; and Chriſt ſo loved us, as to lay down his life for us, leaving us an example,

Ier. 7. 4.

that

that we alſo ought to lay down our lives *for the brethren*, and not to take away the *lives of the brethren* becauſe they differ from us; our Lord *Jeſus* Chriſt and his Miniſters are of another minde all the New Teſtament over; the weapons of our warfare, ſaith St. *Paul* are not carnall, but mighty through God, and not through the arme of fleſh: So *2 Tim.* 2. 24, 25. the ſervants of the Lord muſt not ſtrive but be gentle unto all men, patient, with meekneſſe inſtructing them that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance: And *Tit.* 3. 2. ſhewing all meekneſſe to all men; look alſo into the 14. chap. of the *Romans*; and you ſhall ſee of what different judgement and practiſes the Saints were there, as they held contradictions, ſo did they practiſe them too, one would eat, another would not eat; one would regard a day, and he did this to the Lord, *i.e.* Becauſe he was perſwaded the Lord had ſo Commanded, another would not regard a day, and he did this to the Lord too, being perſwaded the Lord required no ſuch obſervations: friends here were contradictions amongſt Saints, in things of the higheſt nature, in point of Worſhip; moſt of the old Puritans, and non-Conformiſts of this Kingdom, know well what it *is to keep or regard a day*; they can tell you that the moſt ſpirituall worſhip, and the higheſt and chiefeſt ſervice of Ieſus Chriſt, was concerned in it, and was meant by it; It was ſurely no indifferent thing, as we have been perſwaded to believe, matters of religious cogniſance were contained in it, the Apoſtle ſpeaking of it, as done unto the Lord, men obſerving, or not obſerving, as conſcious of that duty, which the Lord had enjoyned them, or of that liberty wherewith Ieſus Chriſt had made them free; Now what is the Apoſtles councel in this controverſie, doth he adviſe to cenſuring, condemning, fining, Impriſoning, or killing one another; no ſuch thing, but the contrary: let not the weak Judge the ſtrong, and let not the ſtrong deſpiſe the weak, Chap 14. ver. 3. which he confirms with ſeverall reaſons, every man ſtands or fals to his own maſter, ver. 4. according to that of our Saviour Chriſt, *Math* 23 8. call no man Rabbi, for one is your maſter, and all ye are brethren; and ver. 10. we ſhall all ſtand before the Judgement Seat of Chriſt; 2 Cor. 10. 4

Christ; and then ver. 12. every one shall give an account of himself to God; and Chap. 15. 1. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please themselves; and ver. 2. let every one please his neighbour, for good to edification, which he backs with this inforcing reason, ver. 3. for even Christ pleased not himself, and the conclusion of the whole matter is this, ver. 7. *Wherefore receive you one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of his Father*; if Christ love, receive, and imbrace you, although of differing Judgements and practises; go ye and do likewise, do ye love, receive, and imbrace each other. These Scriptures are full, and if opened, would spin the thred of my discourse longer then I intended; but there is very much in them, if the Lord would give us an understanding that we might beleeve them: Friends, they are our Gospell, and I shall leave them with you; as those which shall one day rise up in Judgement against such as have imbraced them, and yet walk contrary to what they report unto us. Undoubtedly the meanes that Christ hath appoynted to propagate his Gospell, and to advance his Kingdome, *is the sword of the Spirit*, and not the *sword of Steele*; by this it is that Antichrist hath so enlarged his dominions, as you may see, *Revel.* 13. 7. and therefore heare his Doom, which shall surely be accomplished on him, and all such too, as in this kind take part with him, ver. 10. he that leads into Captivity, must go into Captivity; and he that kills with the sword, must be killed with the sword; here is the patience and faith of the Saints, according to that of our saviour, *Matth.* 26. 52. they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword; and before I shall passe from this, I beseech you, as you tender the comming of Iesus Christ his Kingdom, which you daily pray for; and the peace and welfare of this your own native Kingdome where you live, that you would seriously consider with your selves, whether this usurpation of power over the bodies of the Saints, in respect of spirituall things, (as Antichrist himself hath done in all ages) may not be the true and adequate cause, why the Lord hath suffered *the sword to bathe it self in blood*, and to make it selfe *drunk with the blood of the slain* in these parts for divers yeares

yeares paſt, and for many more in the parts beyond the ſeas; ſo *Rev.* 16.6. They have ſhed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou haſt given them blood to drink, for they are worthy: and what improbability is there of Peace amongſt us, whileſt this devilliſh ſpirit of hatred and perſecution (for the devill was a murtherer from the beginning) which hath given *Antichriſt his denomination, life, and being*, doth yet abide, is nouriſhed and maintained by us? Rev. 9. 2.

And ſo I come to the ſecond Point, wherein I ſhall be brief, which is:

2. *Point.*

That though the Presbyterian Churches were truly conſtituted and ordered according to the rule of the word (as indeed they are not) yet maintaining any errour either in judgement, or practiſe, that the reſt of the Chriſtians in the Kingdom, who joyn not themſelves to them, cannot truly and properly be termed Schiſmaticks for this.

I have told you formerly in this diſcourſe, whileſt I opened the ſeverall words, that according to the true nature of the word, *Schiſme ſignifies a diſ-union, diviſion, or cleaving aſunder of parts, which were before united in a ſolid body*: Let us apply this to the buſineſſe in hand, and *Schiſme* is nothing elſe but a diviſion or ſeparation in judgement and practiſe of perſons from ſome Church or body, to which they were before united: and when I pray was it that thoſe who are now called *Heretickſ*, *Sectaries*, and *Schiſmaticks*, were joyned together in a body with thoſe who are termed *Presbyterians*, and who put theſe names upon them? Who can with any face affirm that ever theſe men were members of any *Presbyterian Churches* in this Kingdom of *England*, or ever had union or communion with them as ſuch? how can they then be ſaid to make a Schiſme or ſeparation, to part away, or divide aſunder from them; who knows not, that they are *but of yeſterday*, if ſo they may be ſaid to have yet any being to this day, ſome few it may be ſhuffled together after a faſhion here in this great City, but few or none elſe, throughout the Kingdom, and who knowes not alſo, that many of theſe men, who are thus reproached by them, were ſuch as they are in their opinion and practiſes long before there was any noiſe, hope, or expectation

pectation of any *Presbyterian Government* or *Churches* to be erected in this Kingdom.

Object. Neither will it help them to say they were Members of *the Church of England* in the Bishops times, and the Church consists of the same Members still.

1. *Ans.* But its notoriously known, that many of them were not so, having long before discovered filthinesse in her *skirts*, and if upon the common abjuration of those Officers, Offices, and wayes, the same filthinesse, Tyranny, Superstition, &c. being generally by Discourses, Conferences, Arguments, Debates, Laws, Ordinances, and Oaths made known to many more, *they have* according to their Protestations, and Covenants forsaken those wayes, and are come up farther in a Reformation then the common light of the State will yet reach to, who shall lay this as a crime unto their charge, when as the higher powers, through a speciall hand of Providence engaging men in a solemn Covenant for Reformation, have necessarily forced them hereunto?

2. I answer, if the Members be such (as indeed it is too true) this cannot but be a Just cause of breaking from them, though men for such a separation, ought not to be termed Schismaticks (for Schisme is alwayes a causlesse seperation) whilst they depart rather from their corruptions, then their Communion; being ready to joyn with them in such acts of Piety, wherein they are not obliged to professe or practise, what they are perswaded is Eroneous; but I conclude this argument with this Assertion:

That to leave the Church, and to leave the externall Communion of a Presbyterian Church, is not one and the same, but two distinct things: the first is done by ceasing to be a Member of the Church, *i. e.* by ceasing to have those requisites which make & constitute a man a Member of it, (*viz.*) Faith and obedience: the second by refusing to communicate with such a Church in her publike worship and service of God: I affirme this as a certain and undoubted truth, that *there is no necessity of communicating with true Believers in evill actions*; when men are Convinced, know, and believe they are so; nay, I assert farther, *there is a necessity herein of seperation from them*:

And

and men may without ſcruple, forſake and renounce the receiving and practiſe of ſome opinions and obſervances, the which your Churches hold, and in which they do communicate, but I maintain, that this is done without *Hereſie or Schiſme*; becauſe they have cauſe to do ſo, and no man can have cauſe to be a Heretick or Schiſmatick; and ſo I paſſe to the third Poſition, which is:

That in caſe the name of Sectaries & Schiſmaticks be truly applicable to any perſons in this Nation, that themſelves and no others can ſo properly deſerve that name; and that they only make the rent and diviſion that is amongſt us; my reaſon is, becauſe theſe men endeavour to force and compell others to the opinion and practiſe of ſuch tenants, as themſelves maintain for true, when others are convinced they are falſe; a thing themſelves did laetly much complaine againſt, and which was hatefull and deteſtable in the old Epiſcopacy, but is of a ſudden grown very laudable, and lovely in our *new Presbyterie*; I ſhall hold forth this truth in theſe two Aſſertions, which I ſhall place as Bul-warks, to defend theſe poor harmleſſe Sectaries, from all the force the *Presbyterian enmy* can raiſe againſt them. 3. *Point.*

1. That not every ſeparation, but onely a cauſleſſe or needleſſe ſeparation from the externall Communion of any Church is the ſin of Schiſme.

If this Poſition be not ſound, there can be no juſtification of the Proteſtants ſeparation from the Church of *Rome*, nor of thoſe eminent Saints, who have in all Ages born witneſſe againſt the errours of that Church.

2. That Antichriſtian *ſpirit* and *principle* of *perſecution*, which makes ſome men *to impoſe* on others, under penalties, a neceſſity of profeſſing known errours, and practiſing known corruptions, is a ſufficient, juſt, & neceſſary cauſe of ſeparation, and that this is the cauſe which Proteſtants alledge, to juſtifie their ſeparation from the Church of *Rome*: now that divers things practiſed *by the Presbyterian Churches are errors*, known ſo to be to thoſe that depart from them: None without the higheſt breach of charity can deny, nor with leſſe impudency affirm they endeavour not that others ſhould believe the ſame, or ſuffer.

All that men forſake in them is onely the beliefe, practiſe, and profeſſion of their errors: And for men not to forſake the *belief of their errours*, having diſcovered them ſo to be, *is impoſſible*, and not to forſake the *practiſe and profeſſion* of them, is *damnable hypocriſie*. Let them free their Churches from requiring the belief, practiſe, or profeſſion of any errour, or whether they will or no, they muſt free ſuch as depart from them, from being Schiſmaticks: for Schiſm there cannot be in leaving their communion; unleſſe men were obliged to continue in it: And *man* cannot be obliged by *man*, but to what either formally or virtually *he is obliged by God*: For all juſt power is from God: God the eternall Truth, neither can nor will oblige us to believe *the leaſt, and the moſt innocent falſhood, to be a truth*, that is, *to err*: nor to *profeſſe a known errour*, which is *to lie*: Thus you ſee that whileſt they require the belief, practiſe or profeſſion of any errour amongſt the conditions of their Communion, the obligation of mens communicating with them ceaſeth, and ſo the imputation of Schiſme, and the *names of Hereticks and Sects* are vaniſh into nothing, but lie heavy upon themſelves for making mens ſeparation, juſt and neceſſary, by requiring unneceſſary, and unlawfull conditions of their Communion; either let them prove then, that they *erre not at all*, or forbare thoſe odious names, or at leaſt apply them rightly (as they ought) to themſelves.

If men would be themſelves, and would be content that others ſhould be ſo in the choice of their Religion, *the ſervants of God, and not of men*; if they would allow that the way to Heaven is no narrower now, then Chriſt left it; if all men that believe the Scriptures, would free themſelves from prejudice, and paſſion, and ſincerely endeavour to finde out the true ſence of them, live according to them, and require no more of others, but to do ſo: who doth not ſee (ſith *all neceſſary truths* are plainly and evidently ſet down in Scripture) there would of neceſſity be amongſt all men, in all things neceſſary, *unity of opinion, unity of love, and a ſpirit of mutuall toleration*: By which means all *Schiſme* and *Hereſie* would be baniſhed the world, and thoſe wretched contentions, which now rend and tear in pieces, not the coat, but the Members

and

and Bowels of Christ (which mutual Pride & Tyranny, curſing, killing, and damning, would fain make mortall) ſhould ſpeedily receive a moſt bleſſed concluſion: By this means indeed, ſhould the Lord be one, and his name one in the *Nations*, *which oneneſſe* is not meant of any outward form, but of the *oneneſſe of love*, and affection in the ſpirit: Doubtleſſe, at this day, the moſt vehement Accuſers, are the greateſt *Schiſmaticks*, and thoſe who talk of Uniformity, do drive at Tyrannie, and will have peace with none, but their ſlaves and vaſſals.

By a late learned Antagoniſt of the Church of *Rome*, (and that whileſt the Prelates were in their pride) it was truly ſaid, Nothing is more againſt Religion, then to force Religion, *Humane violence* may make men *counterfeit*, but cannot make *them believe*, and is good for nothing, but to breed *form* without, and *Atheiſm* within. Beſides, if this means of bringing men to embrace any Religion, were generally uſed, as if it may be juſtly uſed in any place *by thoſe that have power*, and think *they have Truth*: Certainly, it cannot with reaſon be denied, but that it may be uſed in every place, by thoſe that have *power as well as they*, and think they *have truth as well as they*, what could follow but the maintenance *perhaps of truth*, but perhaps only *of the profeſſion of it* in one place, and the *oppreſſion* of it in a thouſand; what will follow, but the preſervation perhaps of *unity*, but perhaps *only of uniformity* in particular States, but the Imortalizing of the great and lamentable diviſion of Chriſtendom and the world. Therefore what can follow from it, but perhaps in the judgement of carnall policy, the Temporall benefit and tranquility of temporall States and Kingdoms, but certainly the infinite prejudice, if not the deſolation of the Kingdom of Chriſt, and therefore it well becomes them who have their portions in this life, and ſerve no higher State then that of *England*, *Scotland*, or *Ireland*, (nor this neither no farther then they may ſerve themſelves by it) to maintaine *by worldly power and violence their State inſtrument Religion*: But they that are indeed lovers of *Chriſt*, of *Truth*, of the *Church*, of *mankinde*, ought with all *courage* to oppoſe themſelves

ſelves againſt it as Antichriſtian, and a Common *enemy to all theſe.*

They that know there is a King of Kings, by whoſe will and pleaſure Kingdoms ſtand and fall, they know, that to no King, or State, any thing can be profitable, which is unjuſt: (our experiment is too neer us at this day; The deſolations of our State are witneſſes hereof,) and that nothing can be more evidently unjuſt, then to force weak men by the profeſſion of a Religion, which they beleeve not, to looſe their own eternall happineſſe, leaſt they looſe their temporall Eſtates and quietneſſe, there being *no danger to any ſtate from any mans opinion; unleſſe ſuch, by which diſobedience to authority, or impiety is taught: unleſſe this bloody Doctrine be joyned with it, that it is lawfull for the Magiſtrate by humane violence, to enforce men to his own Religion*: Oh let not our *Magiſtrates* in this, take part with the ſcarlet *Whore*, who for theſe many Ages hath daily ſacrificed thouſands of poor innocent Chriſtians, under the name of *Hereticks*, *Sectaries*, and *Schiſmaticks*: Doubtleſſe, if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf would have ſubmitted to the expoſitions and interpretations which the Prieſts and Doctors had at that time given out upon the Scriptures, they had never crucified him, and put him to ſuch open ſhame: But becauſe, that *he and his apoſtles* after him would according *to that new light*, which they had received, endeavour to ſet up a Reformation (all which was yet no other then a clearer, and fuller Declaration of what the Scriptures did hold forth) above and beyond the *light* and *underſtanding* of theſe men, who were no other, then the *Divine Presbyterie of thoſe times*, therefore received they ſuch hard meaſure from them, and ſuffered as Blaſphemers and Hereticks under them, and by their cenſure; *We have a law, and by this law, he ought to die*, Joh. 14.7. *Pilate* (though the ſupream Magiſtrate) was no other but *their Executioner then*, as the Civill powers have been in all Generations ſince to this ſort of men, who under a pretence of holineſſe, have daily embrewed their hands in innocent blood.

Before I end, there are ſome Texts of Scriptures, which ſeem repugnant to what hath been aſſerted, and would be anſwered, as,

That in *Tit.*3.10. Him that is an Heretick, after the first and second admonition, reject; this Text placeth a power somewhere, both of judging Hereticks, and proceeding against them. *Object.*

I answer, True it is in the Primitive and Apostolical Churches; amongst the rest of those gifts, which were powred forth by Jesus Christ upon the Saints, this was one, *discerning of spirits*, 1 Cor. 12.10. but this gift amongst others in the Apostacy, and falling away of the Churches (which was foretold by the Apostle, 2 *Thes.*2.3. and 1 *Joh.* 4.3. where the holy Ghost saith expresly, that instead of the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of Antichrist should come, and was already) was lost; and because of the want hereof, the Saints, whom God hath stirred up to bear witnesse to the truth in their severall Ages, ever since have unrighteously suffered, been persecuted and put to death, under this notion and name of Hereticks. *Answ.*

Secondly, In case some Heresies may be so grosse, that even to this day, he that runs may read, and the Saints according to that small measure of the spirit, which they have received might judge them so to be; yet this text *belongs to the Church* as their portion, and *not to the civill Magistrate*, as a Magistrate; and what censure or punishment soever this rejection was, it was to be executed by the Ecclesiasticall, and not by the Civill power; so that to apply such texts as this to the power of the Magistrate, is one of the most grosse, and palpable wrestings of Scripture that can be, and yet is too common amongst the Gentlemen of the *Jus Divinum* Tribe in their discourses, printed, and unprinted, as I my self not long since (before the House of Commons at a Publique Fast) heard that of *Rev.* 2.20. *Because thou sufferest that woman Iezabel, &c.* which was written to the Angel of the Church of *Thyatira*, either weakly or wilfully alledged, to justifie their power (*viz.* the Magistrates) in spirituall things, by which you may take a scantling of that gift among them. 2.

Thirdly, Supposing Churches *with this gift of discerning*, and so this power among them, yet can it not be lawfull for them to proceed against men who hold Heresies (nor indeed can they be properly so called) unlesse they have acknowledged, and 3.

and profeſt the contrary thereunto before, and ſo have departed from that truth, which in their Communion they maintained; which appears from this next verſe, to that we have in hand, *Tit.* 3.11. where the Apoſtle ſaith, that a Heretick is ſelf condemned; αὐτοκατάκριτος *i.e.* that light which he had formerly received, doth now judge him & condemn him as it was in *Iulian* the Apoſtat, who was forced to confeſſe at laſt *vicisti Galilee*: I conceive men, who never made any more profeſſion of Chriſtian Religion, then what they have been paſſive in from their forced Baptiſme, and education, having at no time attained to any thing, which hath been ſo much as like a *New birth*, or change in them, and ſo were never reckoned, or eſteemed by Saints among the number of Saints, or admitted into their fellowſhip, or communion; ſuch men (what Tenets, or Errours ſoever they take up) are rather to be accounted *prophane perſons*, or *Atheiſts*, then *Hereticks*: As it were improper to call either a Jew, or Turk a Heretick in *Scripture-ſenſe*, though they deny Chriſt to be the Son of God: which I confirm from that place of 2 *Pet.* 2.1. where the Apoſtle mentioning falſe Teachers, which ſhould bring in damnable Hereſies; he ſaith, they were ſuch as did deny the Lord that *bought them*, *i.e.* though their Conſciences had received ſuch Convictions from the ſpirit that *Iesus christ* was the Lord and Saviour of the world, and ſo had given themſelves up to him as ſuch, yet they afterward brought in thoſe Doctrines which denied this again.

Object. The next place Objected, is *Rom.* 13.4. where the Magiſtrate is ſaid to be a Miniſter of God for wrath upon him that doth evil. Now if you adde to this, *Gal.* 5.20. it appears that Hereſie is an evil work, being there reckoned among the deeds of the fleſh, and ſo puniſhable by the civill power.

Anſw. Theſe places thus united, I ſuppoſe, do enforce the Objection, and make it ſtronger then I have yet any where met with it. But I anſwer, there are in the ſame, *Gal.* 5.20,21. ſeverall other works of the fleſh numbred up together with Hereſies, which yet I conceive, the Civill power cannot poſſibly take cogniſance of, as hatred, emulations, envyings, and the Civill Magiſtrate can no more draw his ſword againſt the One, then

againſt

against the Other, no more against Hereſie, then against hatred, emulation, and envy.

Secondly, for that place of the *Romanes*, it was a Scripture written to the *Chriſtians, living under heathen Magiſtrates*; *theſe* ſurely had no cognizance of the ſeverall controverſies, or opinions, which might fall in *amongſt the Chriſtians*, in the profeſſion of their *Religion*, which *the Heathens* ſo much hated, and therefore Hereſie cannot fall under the power of the ſword, there mentioned; and if ſo, let all men judge how truly and properly theſe men apply the word; and whether this be not a wringing of the Scripture like a noſe of wax and a perverting of it to their own, and other mens deſtruction: I ſhould have ſpoken more fully to this point, but that I finde my ſelf prevented by Mr. *Iohn Goodwin*, in his late book called *Hagiomaſtix*, from *pag.* 58. to *pag.* 66. A piece worthy the ſight of ſuch men, who enquire after Truth. 2.

One great queſtion yet remains, to which I ſhall ſpeak a word or two, and ſo end.

Q. If Hereſie & Schiſm be of ſuch a doubtfull nature, and ſo hard to be found out; if Hereticks and Schiſmaticks prove to be ſuch, whom we leaſt ſuſpected; if that gift of diſcerning, whereby they ſhould be known, be loſt in the Apoſtacy of the Churches; if the impoſing our own fallible thoughts, and expoſitions upon the conſciences of other men be Anti-chriſtianiſme, and a ſetting up of the *man of ſin*; what ſhall be done in regard of our Solemn League and Covenant, whereby we are engaged to endeavour the extirpation of *Hereſie* and *Schiſme*, and to bring the Churches in the three kingdoms to a Vniformity, &c.? 2 Theſ. 2. 4.

Anſw. I ſay, *concerning the Covenant*, in reference to the *Preſbyterians*, as they ſometimes ſpake of the *Church*, in reference *to the Prelates*, they dazle the eyes, and aſtoniſh the ſenſes of poor people, with the glorious name of the *Covenant*: This is the *Gorgons head*, that hath enchanted them, and held them in bondage to their *Preſbyterian Errours*; All their ſpeech is of the *Covenant*, the *Covenant*, neglecting in the mean time, *God and the Scriptures*. It matters not for other things in the Covenant, as you may ſee in the next anſwer, *Smect.* Sect. 17.

ſo

ſo as men will but walk according to the ſame (in their interpretation) in an *outward uniformity* of Religion, and in a *viſible form* of Church Government, and worſhip, then which nothing can be more *againſt the power of godlineſſe*, which conſiſts in an inviſible, and internall breathing, panting, working, and acting of the ſoul toward God, for *God is a ſpirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth*: *All outward Forms impoſed*, do but ordinarily, and commonly breed *Atheiſme and hypocriſie*: It were well therefore that the Civill powers would be carefull, how they engage carnall men in Religious Covenants, and about ſpirituall things.

Ioh. 4. 24.

2. I anſwer, we ſeem very zealous *for extirpation* of that which is neither *in our cognizance nor power*, and for prophaneſſe, and ſuch things as are againſt the power of godlines, which *in the ſame clauſe we covenant againſt*, and againſt which the laws of God and men are in force; and which are certainly and undoubtedly in the cognizance of the *civill power*, and for which he muſt give an account to God; how doth every one cry out upon the neglect of theſe? whoſe eyes, and ears are not full of the Reelings, Railings, Belchings, Vomitings, Swearings Curſings, Lyings, Stealings, Brawlings, and Fightings of Drunkards, Liars, Adulterers, Whoors, Prophane, Graceleſſe, Godleſſe perſons? and yet theſe are altogether, or in a great meaſure unpuniſhed, *due execution of Laws againſt theſe were a right Reformation indeed*, acceptable to God, and all good men: Sin, open, groſſe, palpable ſin, doth ſo abound every where, that no juſt man can walk up and down, without vexing his righteous ſoul, for the unclean converſation of the wicked: Remember who thoſe men are (reproved by our Saviour, *Matth.* 23.24) that thus *ſtrain at a gnat, and ſwallow a camel.*

3. I anſwer, That we are in our ſeverall places and callings, to endeavour againſt theſe, (in like manner *Art.* 2.) now God calls us out againſt theſe men, (in caſe we could diſcern them infallibly) not with a *ſword of ſteel*, but the *ſword of the ſpirit, the word of God*, which is mighty *through God*, to convince gain-ſayers, and the ſervant of the Lord muſt ſtrive no other-

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wise then thus, as I shewed before; If men will but truly and faithfully (as they have opportunity,) hold forth that light they have, to others, to turn them from their errours, and in other things walk as Christians; I dare say, they have done all that God requires of them in this case, so as they may boldly look God in the face, at the great day of appearing: and the *Covenant* (*Sano sensu*) can have no other interpretation then this.

To shut up all, I doubt not, but I have at least wise opened a way to let in truth amongst us as concerning this particular, and to engage others, who may have a greater portion, both of time and strength to vindicate, & maintain what hath been asserted; and if these things which are written, be not yet convincingly satisfactory to each ingenuous, and non-pre-engaged Reader; *Let there be for all parties, Independents, Brownists, Anabaptists, an equall liberty, of Debate, Conference, Discourse, and Presse with the Presbyterians*, if each of them be not able to prove from *Scripture, their own way and practise to come neerer to the pattern of Truth*, then the *Presbyterian*, (though I suppose none of them to be exactly according to the Rule, for its reserved for the glory of the *new Ierusalem* to have nothing that defiles, or is a lie to enter into it) I am confident *they will desire no Toleration*; and if they do, then you must necessarily conclude with me, *it is most equall*, & that the *Presbyterians* are the *greatest Hereticks* (as being in the choice of their opinions further off from the truth of Scripture then the rest) & the *greatest Schismaticks* (as practising according to those opinions) that are at this day in this Nation.

Conclus.

Rev. 21. 27

A Queſtion for a Kingdom to Anſwer.

A Kingdom hath three parties into which it is divided, and theſe three are diſtinguiſhed by three notions, *Prelaticall*, *Presbyteriall*, *Independent*, two of theſe grew into one, againſt the other one Party, which was more great and conſiderable then theſe two, and overcame it; And then theſe two, that (as one) overcame the third, reſolve back into two again: And one of theſe two endeavour now to overcome the other: Upon this, let it be conſidered, whether that one party, which was at firſt, overcome by two in one: (Now ſince one of theſe two are diſſolving, and ſuppreſſing the other, that made one with it) Be not likely to be the overcomer, and prevailing party over both theſe?

A Queſtion for a Church to Anſwer.

A National Church was once *Epiſcopal*, and ſeeks for extirpation, and ſuppreſſion of a few that were called *Hereticks*, and *Schiſmaticks*, and *non-Conformiſts* to it, by Impriſonments, Baniſhments, &c. and yet theſe few, and inconſiderable Party, increaſes, and prevails againſt all this power, and Nationall Government.

Vpon this, let it be conſidered, Whether a new *Nationall Government*, armed with a like power, and proceeding againſt a far more numerous party, called *Hereticks*, *Schiſmaticks*, and *non-Conformiſts* to it, be able to extinguiſh theſe, upon the experience, of the inſufficiency, & unſucceſsfulneſſe, and weakneſſe of the ſame power, and force, exerciſed to the ſame end, and deſigne as before.

FINIS.

Revel. 16.

Because thou art luke-warme, and neither cold nor hot, I will ſpew thee out of my mouth.

Verſe 17.

Thou ſayeſt I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing: and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blinde, and naked.